

A Declaration of Independence from Corporate Tyranny

A proclamation of the people of the United States, reasserting that all just power flows from their consent alone.

The Proclamation

It has come to this, that we must loudly proclaim that our government has become beholden to a corporate and billionaire class instead of to its citizens, and therefore, we are no longer beholden to its demands. Nor are we bound by its laws, for they no longer represent us. Its members have ceased to be our representatives, but now use government solely as a means to enrich themselves and their donor class. They represent only the obscenely wealthy and their limited interests, whose accounts are paid at the people's expense. In so far as true authority is only granted by the consent of the governed, it is understood that their positions are not seats of power, but must and only be workbenches of justice and reform. Their duty is to sacrifice personal goals and ambitions in service to the common good. And since, in these duties they have so clearly failed, forfeiting our hard-won democracy for a new capitalist despotism, they are to be systematically dismantled, rejected, and replaced.

The Principles

We still hold these truths to be self-evident: that all people are created equal; that they are endowed with inalienable rights; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among the people, deriving their only legitimate power from the consent of the governed; and that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends — when it serves the few who purchased it rather than the many who consented to it — it is the right of the people to reform it, to reclaim it, and to remake it anew.

Prudence still counsels that governments long established should not be discarded for light or transient causes. We do not write from impatience, nor from the ordinary friction of self-rule, nor from disappointment in any single election. But when a long train of decisions, statutes, and seizures of power reveals a settled design to convert a republic of citizens into a marketplace of donors — to

reduce the voter to a spectator and the corporation to a sovereign — it is the right of the people, nay it is their duty, to throw off such a government and to provide new guardians for their future security and prosperity.

The history of the present order is a history of repeated capture and dispossession, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute dominion of wealth over the common life of this nation. To prove this, let the facts be laid before a candid world.

The Grievances

They have declared that money is speech, and so decreed that those with the most wealth shall have the loudest voice, while the citizen who has only a vote is left to shout into the wind. By the ruling in *Citizens United*, they struck down the people's own limits on corporate spending in elections, and opened the floodgates to limitless and often hidden fortunes, that our representatives might be chosen by donors before ever they are offered to voters.

They have crowned the executive with the immunity of a king. In *Trump v. United States*, they held that a president is shielded from the law for his official acts — granting to one man, in the conduct of the highest office, the very privilege our founders crossed an ocean and waged a war to escape. They have made the chief servant of the republic into a sovereign above it, answerable to no court, when the meanest citizen remains answerable to all of them. This is not the office of a president. This is the prerogative of George the Third.

They have conjured persons out of corporations while withering the personhood of human beings. From the doctrine that a railroad is a person, granted in *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad* under the Fourteenth Amendment, to the ruling in *Hobby Lobby* that a company may hold beliefs and impose them upon its workers, they have dressed the instruments of profit in the robes of conscience and citizenship — even as the living citizen finds her own rights ever more conditional.

They have stripped from the people rights once thought secure. In *Dobbs*, they revoked a recognized liberty over one's own body, dispossessing half this nation of a freedom they had held for two generations — proving that a right granted to a corporation is permanent, while a right held by a person is on loan.

They have dismantled the people's defense of the ballot. In *Shelby County*, they gutted the protections that guarded the vote against those who would suppress it; and in *Rucho*, they declared that the courts will not lift a finger against those who carve the electorate into safe and rigged districts. They have thus ensured that the powerful may choose their voters, rather than the voters their representatives.

They have built a revolving door between the regulator and the regulated, that the foxes might be appointed wardens of the henhouse, and the industries that pollute, that defraud, and that exploit might write the very rules meant to restrain them.

They have rescued the architects of ruin and abandoned the ruined. When the great banks and corporations brought catastrophe upon the nation, they were lifted up with the public treasure; while the families who lost their homes, their savings, and their work were left to bear the wreckage alone.

They have made of necessity a marketplace. They have priced healing beyond the reach of the sick, and let medical debt fall upon the household as a punishment for the crime of being mortal — while the profits of this suffering flow upward without end.

They have severed reward from labor. They have looked upon a generation whose productivity has soared and whose wages have stood frozen, and they have called this prosperity — channeling the fruits of all our work into the fortunes of the few, and the dividends of the already rich.

They have taxed the worker more dearly than the owner, that the wages of toil should be levied while the harvest of capital is sheltered, until the billionaire pays a smaller share than the teacher, the nurse, and the laborer who built the very ground he stands upon.

They have made merchandise of our private lives, harvesting the records of our days, our movements, and our thoughts, to be bought and sold without our consent, that we might be more efficiently sorted, targeted, and made to serve markets we never chose.

They have drowned the voice of the citizen beneath an ocean of lobbyists, until the petition of an ordinary person is a whisper and the petition of an industry is a command — and the doors of our own

legislatures open first, and often only, to those who pay to enter.

They have unjustly taken the lives of citizens, exemplified in *Operation Metro Surge*, for simply engaging in their promised civil rights to protest and speak with a free voice, and they have done this with an illegally assembled federal army of masked agents of a crowned executive – agents held above the law, allowed to violate every right of free citizens, including taking their very lives, while leaving us with no recourse.

And in all these things they have answered the alarm of the people with contempt. We have petitioned. We have voted. We have marched, organized, testified, and pleaded for redress in the most humble terms. Our petitions have been answered only by deeper capture, and our pleas met with the patient indifference of those who know they cannot be removed. A government whose every injury is followed by a fresh injury is unfit to be the steward of a free people.

The Declaration

We have not been wanting in our appeals. We have reminded those in power of the principles upon which this nation was founded. We have appealed to their conscience, to their oath, and to their memory of the republic they swore to serve. They have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity.

We, therefore, the people of the United States, appealing to one another and to our own posterity for the rightness of our intentions, do solemnly publish and declare: that we are, and of right ought to be, a free and self-governing people; that our consent is the only foundation of legitimate power, and that consent we now withdraw from a government that serves wealth above its citizens; that the offices captured by the donor class are to be reclaimed, and their occupants replaced by servants of the common good; and that the new order we build shall be one in which the worth of a person is never again ranked beneath the wealth of a corporation.

To restore this republic to its rightful owners — to wrest it back, by every lawful and collective power a free people possess, from the few who have purchased it — we pledge to one another our effort, our solidarity, our very lives, and our sacred and unyielding resolve.